

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden –

As Co-Chairs of the House Cancer Caucus, we look forward to working with you on the reignited Cancer Moonshot to halve the cancer death rate and “end cancer as we know it today.” As you prepare your Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget request, we ask that you include a request for a substantial increase in funding for cancer research, awareness, and prevention initiatives. Each year, more than 1.6 million Americans are diagnosed with cancer, and approximately 600,000 will lose their lives. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, cancer remains the second leading cause of death among Americans.

Developments in early detection, diagnosis, and cancer care have vastly improved in recent decades. From targeted new therapies to the novel use of immunotherapy, each day scientists are learning more about how cancers develop and how best to treat patients with cancer. However, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has faced growing budgetary pressures, jeopardizing the foundation of cancer research in the United States. As you may know, NCI is experiencing a high demand for research funding that is far beyond that of any other Institute or Center (IC) at the National Institutes of Health. Between FY 2013 and FY 2019, the number of R01 grant applications to NCI rose by 50.6 percent, compared to just 5.6 percent at all other ICs, straining NCI’s budget which cannot keep pace with demand. As a result, only about one-in-eight research grants are currently funded at NCI, about half the rate of other ICs. We are concerned that as a result, lifesaving breakthroughs are being left behind and that young researchers will choose other, more financially secure areas of study.

In addition, approximately one half of the 600,000 cancer deaths in the United States each year could be prevented through the application of existing cancer control initiatives. Unfortunately, funding for the CDC’s Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC), which works with national organizations and state and local governments to lower cancer risk by increasing cancer prevention and screening, increased by only \$15.4 million between FY 2010 and FY 2021, a rate of only 4.2 percent. When removing the CDC’s WISEWOMAN heart disease and stroke program, which receives funding through DCPC, base funding for cancer prevention and control programs rose only 2.3 percent during this entire 12-year window.

It is vitally important that the CDC has the resources to expand screening and prevention efforts. Sadly, many Americans have delayed cancer screening due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in more cancers being diagnosed at later stages when options for treatment are more limited, and leading to an estimated 10,000 additional breast and colorectal cancer deaths alone

over the next decade. With additional resources, the DCPC could increase efforts and raise awareness of cancer prevention and screening, promoting public health and saving lives.

As leaders of the House Cancer Caucus, we ask that you include a substantial request in funding for NCI and the CDC's DCPC in the President's FY 2023 budget request to increase the baseline of support for these important initiatives. We look forward to working with you and our colleagues in Congress to build on this support to increase early detection, spur innovation, develop new treatments and cures, and save lives.

Sincerely,



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress